



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

BOOK REVIEWS.

THE FOUNDATIONS OF BELIEF. By the *Rt. Hon. Arthur James Balfour*. New York and London : Longmans, Green, & Co. 1895. Pages, 366.

There is perhaps no book of recent date that has been more misunderstood than Mr. Balfour's *Foundations of Belief*. It has been claimed by dogmatic theologians as a defence of dogmatism and reviewers have placed it on a line with M. Brunetière's *Bankruptcy of Science*, while freethinkers have denounced it as anti-progressive, illiberal, and hostile to science. The truth is that Mr. Balfour is a calm and considerate thinker who impartially delineates the present religious condition with little, if any, personal admixture of prejudice.

The first impression of the book appears to justify the prevalent notion that Mr. Balfour employs the logic of Mill in corroboration of Calvin's view : for it is true that Mr. Balfour rejects what he calls the scientific world-conception. He opposes naturalism ; he dwells on the insufficiency of reason, and makes "authority" the supreme power which rules over all, regulating the conduct of individuals and swaying the fate of nations. Mr. Balfour's language, especially his use of the terms "science" and "reason," give unavoidably the impression that he is anti-scientific and anti-rationalistic, and it would seem as if our own position, the position of *The Monist* and *The Open Court*, which propounds a religion of science, could find no more antagonistic adversary than the author of *The Foundations of Belief*.

The book has no index, which makes a cursory glance at its contents impossible. It is in this respect like German books, which must either be left alone or read through, if misconceptions are to be avoided. The prominence of the author and the great sensation which the book created, is, however, a sufficient inducement to read the book through, and we are astonished to find that all the reviews that ever came to our hands have mistaken the spirit of its author. There is more agreement, even in the very letter, between Mr. Balfour's position and our own than could be anticipated of a work whose main subject is a denunciation of the narrowness and insufficiency of the scientific world-conception.

We must consider that when Mr. Balfour speaks of science he means that pseudo-science which at present boastfully and noisily assumes all the pretensions that genuine science alone is entitled to. Mr. Balfour's criticisms of science are the

very same strictures which we have again and again made on pseudo-science. He denounces "the naturalistic view that free-will is an absurdity," saying that "the sense of constraint and inevitableness would be as embarrassing to a savage in the act of choice as it would to his more cultivated descendant." Yet he admits that "there is nothing in the theory of determinism which need modify the substance of the moral law." This reminds us of our own position, for we uphold most emphatically the freedom of will, viz., the freedom of choice or the theory that our actions are our own and that through them more than through external conditions our future is moulded. We distinguish between Fatalism and Determinism. Determinism is the theory that everything is determined, both by physical conditions and by the free acts of aspiring beings. Fatalism is the theory that there is no freedom of will, and that whatever a man might choose to do his actions as well as his fate are inevitable. There is room for freedom of will in determinism, as we define it, but not in fatalism.

Mr. Balfour further objects to the ethical theory that the greatest happiness of the greatest number is the right end of action. Here again our agreement is remarkable. We have lost no opportunity of denouncing hedonism, not only as misleading but as fundamentally untrue. The reviewer has condensed his views on the subject in a little tale entitled "The Philosopher's Martyrdom," which is a *reductio ad absurdum* of the Spencerian ethics. The truth is that duty has nothing to do with sentiment; and ethics cannot be established upon the individualistic principle which assumes that death is an absolute finality, or, to use Mr. Balfour's words "refuses to admit that the deeds done and the character formed in this life can flow over into another." We cannot in ethics dispense with the problems of the whence and whither of the human soul. Without them we should have worldly prudence only but no ethics. Indeed, we may say that ethical action is precisely such action as is governed by the consideration of what will be when the present life has come to a close.

As to æsthetics, Mr. Balfour says that "Mr. Spencer's theory, like all others which endeavor to trace back the pleasure-giving qualities of art to some simple and original association, slurs over the real difficulties of the problem." Mr. Spencer characterises art as "a useless and superfluous exercise of human faculties." Because he finds that it originates from the *Spieltrieb* as Schiller calls it, he identifies it with sport and imagines that the higher arts are distinguished from the lower ones by complexity. This, our verdict of the Spencerian art conception, is very similar to Mr. Balfour's.

We have criticised (in *The Soul of Man*, pp. 9-14) Professor Clifford's proposition that the rational originates from the non-rational, and have again and again called attention to the fact that man's reason is the reflected image of the World-Logos, and that the cosmic order is the prototype of man's reason; it is the standard by which we measure the rationality of reason. If a man's reason agrees with those features of reality which make of the world an orderly whole, his arguments will be

correct. Wherever they are in contradiction man will go astray. In other words, the nature of man's reason is not subjectivity but objectivity. Reason is not a product of man's intellect, it is not merely ideal; but man's intellect is a product of that cosmic order which St. John calls the Logos that was in the beginning, it is objective and real. Mr. Balfour's views are here again in close accord with our own. He says: "If the world is not made by Reason, Reason is at all events made by the world;" but he rejects "the non-rational origin of reason" which, as he says, "is a necessary corollary of the naturalistic scheme."

Our agnostic friends in England and America have often criticised our position as being unfair to agnosticism, and our rejection of Mr. Spencer's conception of the first principles as being unknowable is well known. We are glad to see that Mr. Balfour when speaking on the philosophic basis of naturalism finds the same fault which we discover in agnosticism. He quotes Locke that he "suspects that natural philosophy is not capable of being made a science." and adds, "that this remarkable display of philosophic resignation in the father of modern empiricism has been imitated by a long line of distinguished successors." The basis of naturalism is experience, but what these experiences are is not clearly defined by empiricists; nor does Mr. Balfour enter into the problem.

In the third part of the book Mr. Balfour grapples with the problem of "Authority," which, in contrast to Reason, he calls "a group of non-rational causes." The word "non-rational" and the opposition of Authority to Reason have been a source of many misunderstandings. However, a careful reading of these chapters shows that Mr. Balfour understands by Reason the argumentative faculty of an individual man with all its shortcomings and liabilities to error. By Authority he means what we called above the World-Logos, and here our agreement with Mr. Balfour is as pronounced as in all previous instances. But while Mr. Balfour speaks of this Authority that dominates over us as being God, we have inversely defined God as "the Authority of moral conduct." The difference certainly is not great in spite of this inversion, and, in order to show how little antiquated dogmatism or anti-scientific notions are embodied in Mr. Balfour's conception of Authority, we quote what he says about "this group of influences" (sic!) which in one word he calls Authority. He says (p. 201): "They presuppose, to begin with, 'the beliefs of perception, memory, and expectation in their elementary shape; and 'they also imply the existence of an organism fitted for their hospitable reception by 'ages of ancestral preparation. But these conditions, though necessary, are clearly 'not enough; the appropriate environment has also to be provided. And though I 'shall not attempt to analyse with the least approach to completeness the elements 'of which that environment consists, yet it contains one group of causes so important in their collective operation, and yet in popular discourse so often misrepresented, that a detailed notice of it seems desirable."

This is Mr. Balfour's "Authority," which "moulds our feelings, our aspirations, and, what we are more immediately concerned with, our beliefs." And he

adds: "It is from Authority that Reason itself draws its most important premises." Mr. Balfour calls Authority non-rational because he finds it operative as an unconscious power previous to the origin of conscious reasoning. He says: "To Reason "is largely due the growth of new and the sifting of old knowledge. By Reason "also is directed or misdirected the public policy of communities within the narrow "limits of deviation permitted by accepted custom and tradition."

One main mistake of naturalism to which Mr. Balfour calls attention is the "unbalanced consideration of the vastness of Nature." The God of many naturalists is conceived "as moved by the mass of His own works, as lost in spaces of His own creation. He sets store by the number of square miles His creatures inhabit or the foot-pounds of energy they are capable of developing." "But," adds Mr. Balfour, "the magnitude and complexity of the natural world should indeed have no bearing on our conception of God's relation either to us or to it."

So far, we have to recount a number of remarkable agreements between Mr. Balfour's *Foundation of Belief*, which are based upon a consideration of the insufficiency of science, and our own view, which is the Religion of Science. If Mr. Balfour indeed represents the dogmatic church of Christianity, we feel more than ever confident that in genuine science agreement is not only possible, but will actually in the end be accomplished.

We cannot say that Mr. Balfour's book contains a solution of the religious problem. He has not attempted in it to work out a consistent philosophy of religion, and traces of a dualistic, nay, even of an agnostic, conception are visible in many passages.

Mr. Balfour's dualism is most apparent in the first chapter of the third part, "Causes of Experience," where he divides the realm of our mental aspirations into two disparate halves, "the natural world and the spiritual world, the world which "is immediately subject to causation, and the world which is immediately subject "to God." He continues: "The laws of the natural world are revealed to us "by the discoveries of science, while the laws of the spiritual world are revealed "to us through the authority of spiritual intuitions, inspired witnesses, or divinely "guided institutions. And the two regions of knowledge lie side by side, contiguous "but not connected, like empires of different race and language which own no common jurisdiction nor hold any intercourse with each other, except along a disputed and wavering frontier where no superior power exists to settle their quarrels or determine their respective limits" (p. 194). It would lead us too far here to outline our position, which changes this Dualism into a higher Monism in which causation is no longer opposed to God, but is traceable also in spiritual intuitions, inspired witnesses, and divine institutions. We recognise in causation a part and parcel of that power which Mr. Balfour calls Authority. There is not only contiguity, but the most intimate connexion. There are differences of lower and higher ranges of nature, but the divinity of nature lies hidden even in its very elements. The World-Logos, being eternal, was in the beginning, and extends also into the in-

finitely small ; there is no atom bare of that divine guidance which in its most salient actions scientists formulate in the law of causation.

Mr. Balfour's agnosticism appears in his strictures on Mr. Spencer's belief in the unknowable, from the depths of which, Mr. Balfour says, "should emerge the certitudes of religion." Here he agrees better with Mr. Spencer than he is himself aware of, and Mr. Spencer does not fail to call attention to the fact in his reply which appeared in the latest *Fortnightly Review*. We add that religion nowhere rises from the unknown or unknowable, for what does the savage or civilised man care about a thing or God of whom he can know nothing ? The savage worships the thunder-god, *not* because he does *not* know the nature of lightning, but because he does know the obvious dangers connected with it ; he is afraid of it. In the same way man began to be afraid of the curse of sin, which the moral teachers of men, preachers and prophets, pointed out to him. If we base religion on agnosticism, if we let it rise from our ignorance, religious truth will ever remain a blank for us, which we can fill out with our imagination ; and ethics becomes a matter of taste. Morality, in fact, is, according to Mr. Spencer, that which pleases the majority of mankind. However, if we base religion upon the experiences of mankind, we shall discover the spiritual needs of man, the needs for strengthening his character in temptation, for guidance in the intricacies of life, for comfort in affliction. We shall discover that the power that punishes crime is as real as gravitation, and that its authority is ultimately identical with the authority of Science and Reason.

The gravest mistake of Mr. Balfour's book, in our opinion, is the misapplication of the name "science." By honoring pseudo-science with the name of science he seems to imply that there is no way out of the fashionable errors of a number of scientists, except by opposing to science the authority of antiquated church traditions, which should be accepted without criticism, and in this sense, indeed, Mr. Balfour's book is commonly understood. We are happy to state that this is a mistake, and can say so on the best authority,—Mr. Balfour himself. While he condemns the theories that commonly go by the name of science, he entirely accepts the proposition that "genuine science is divine," and we only wish that to forestall misconceptions, he had said so in his book. Nor does Mr. Balfour anywhere oppose "Authority to Science," much less does he think that "Reason is ungodly." He would not deny that in all probability his views are not so wide apart from those of the editorial position of *The Monist*, as may seem at first sight.

Mr. Balfour says on page 83 ; "I am not aware that any one has as yet endeavored to construct the catechism of the future purged of every element drawn from any other source than the naturalistic creed. It is greatly to be desired that "this task should be undertaken in an impartial spirit." We submit that we have written a Catechism of Naturalism, which appeared in *The Open Court*, under the title "A Catechism of the Religion of Science," and has been republished in pamphlet form under the title *The Religion of Science*. But we have to add that the

propositions of our conception of Naturalism are almost throughout contrary to the propositions of Naturalism as criticised by Mr. Balfour.

It would be an interesting task to compare Mr. Balfour's propositions offered in criticism of science with those which we have made in the name of science. In spite of a radical difference in our methods of attacking the problem, there is a coincidence in detail which is remarkable and would be curious if it were not conditioned by a deeper connexion, which proves that on whatever radius we may advance in our search for the centre of the circle, we shall at last meet in one and the same point.

We regret that Mr. Balfour, in discussing the basic ideas of religion, did not enter into one problem, which after all will prove to be the problem of all problems. I mean the problem of personality, which is closely connected and even in some respects identical with that other great problem, the nature of God. It is probable that Mr. Balfour omitted these questions on good purpose, because they would have involved him in intricate investigations; but we hope that he will find leisure for another book, in which he will give us his views on the nature of man's soul.

P. C.

STORY OF THE LIFE OF JESUS. For the Young. Told from an Ethical Standpoint.

By *W. L. Sheldon*. Philadelphia: S. Burns Weston. 1895. Pages, 148.

AS OTHERS SAW HIM. A Retrospect. A. D. 54. Boston and New York: Houghton, Mifflin, and Company. 1895. Pages, 217.

Christ is a living power in the world, for the Christ-idea constitutes one of the most potent factors of our civilisation. No one, therefore, whose labors lie in the field of public morals can afford to avoid the question "What do you think of Christ?" The unbeliever not less than the believer must take issue and solve the problem, each one to his own satisfaction, before he can think of pursuing his course in life with consistency.

The two books before us offer two replies, both given by men who refuse to recognise in Christ a supernatural revelation, but while the one, destined for the use of children in the Ethical Sunday schools, omits every allusion to theology and changes Jesus into an ethical teacher after the fashion of the Societies for Ethical Culture, the other uses the Christian traditions without either endorsing a belief in the supernatural mission of Christ or introducing into the narrative the properly miraculous as actual facts.

The story of the life of Jesus by *W. L. Sheldon* is a long-winded recapitulation of the gospel reports with every allusion to God, angels, miracles, and immortality left out. Thus, when the shepherds were in the fields, Mr. Sheldon says, "It seemed as if there were a choir of voices singing all about them in the darkness, "pouring forth words of beauty, so sweet that at first the men could not understand them. Yet as they listened, it was as if amid the music they kept hearing